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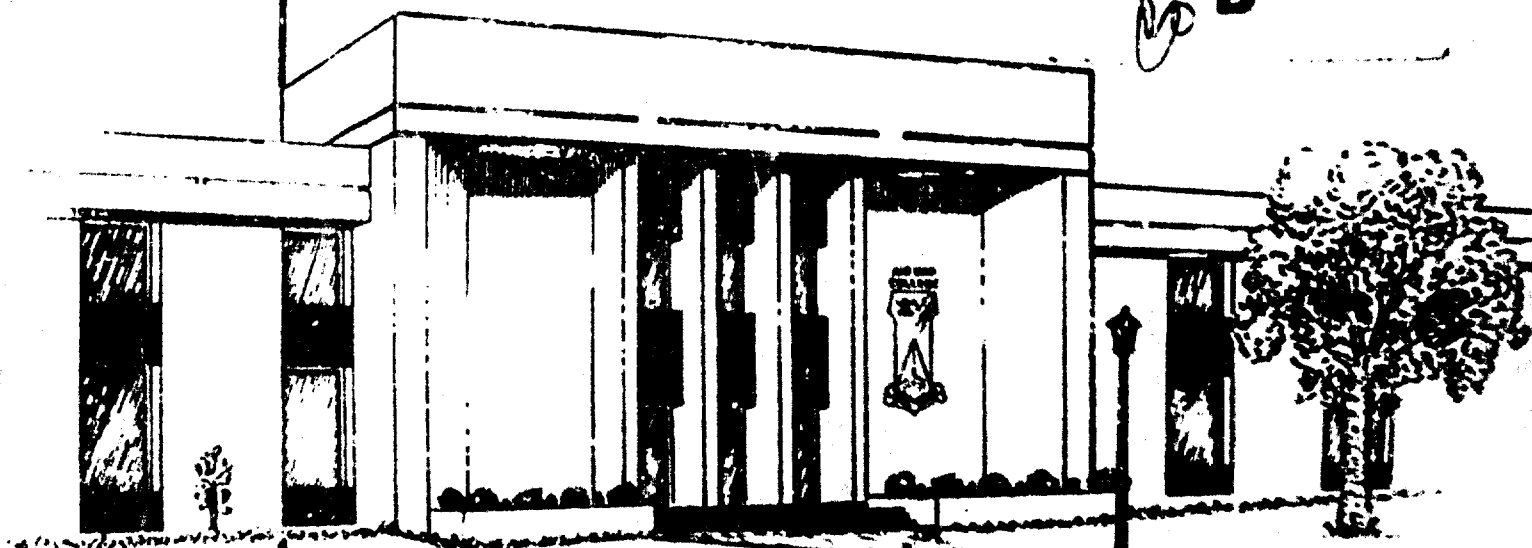
OF HELICOPTERS AND DOCTRINE: A STUDY OF THE
SOF ROTARY WING LIFT TRANSFER

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OF HELICOPTERS AND DOCTRINE: A STUDY OF THE
SOF ROTARY WING LIFT TRANSFER

by

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A DEFENSE ANALYTICAL STUDY SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
IN
FULFILLMENT OF THE CURRICULUM
REQUIREMENT

Advisor: Colonel Bruce S. Goodhue

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

March 1989

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TITLE: Of Helicopters and Doctrine: A Study of the SOF Rotary Wing Lift Transfer

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An examination of special operations forces (SOF) rotary wing lift developments in the 1980s, including the Air Force and Army attempt to transfer the mission solely to the Army, raises questions regarding interservice relationships and support doctrine application. The effect of external influences on that process is also described. A brief description of the two services' past accommodations regarding ground force lift support illuminates the divisive issues and relates how these roles and missions delineations set the tone for the SOF rotary wing transfer. To determine Air Force beliefs regarding lift support, past and current doctrine is examined and its application analyzed. An assessment of the key issues clarifies the need for a more robust joint focus across the spectrum of conflict. While weapon systems appear to get some of this focus, the need for joint doctrines and strategies to develop the systems is great. Suggestions for this joint development of ideas, as well as uses, for future weapon systems concludes the study.

*Keywords: Joint military activities;
military doctrine, Airlift operations;
Low intensity conflict (LIC)*



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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth R. Pribyla is a 1970 graduate of Texas Tech University with a B.S. and a ROTC commission. He received his M.A. in 1980 from Webster University, St Louis, MO. A master navigator with nearly 4000 hours in C-130 tactical airlift, rescue and special operations, he served a tour at HQ Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service and 23rd Air Force. Most recently, he commanded the 55th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, a composite squadron of HC-130 special operations tanker aircraft and UH-60A rescue helicopters. Lt. Col. Pribyla is a 1984 graduate of Air Command and Staff College and a 1989 graduate of Air War College.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Iran hostage rescue failure of April 24, 1980, coupled with the resulting Holloway Commission Report, awakened a lively debate about military capabilities to deal with third world threats facing U.S. citizens and interests at home and abroad. Terms such as low intensity conflict, counterterrorism, and peacetime contingency operations joined dusted-off ideas of counterinsurgency, revolutionary war, and foreign internal defense in the rising crescendo. The US military's special operations forces (SOF), considered by many to be the counter to this threat, became a primary focus of the debate.

Then, in 1983, the Chiefs of the Army and Air Force Staffs, in an attempt to increase interservice cooperation in battlefield synchronization and integration, initiated the Joint Force Development Process (JFDP). The resulting memorandum of agreement, signed 22 May 1984, established 31 initiatives to be implemented by the services. One of these, Initiative 17, called for the transfer of the SOF rotary wing lift support mission from the Air Force to the Army.¹ This move "to eliminate duplication and to consolidate all SOF rotary wing aircraft into a single service"² quickly became embroiled in the larger debate over SOF revitalization. However, a number of concerns with the initiative quickly came to the fore.

The move was seen by some as an Air Force attempt to evade the SOF role and by others as a bureaucratic division of roles and missions in the vein of the Key West accords and other "turf battles". First, the Air Force had only a limited SOF rotary wing capability and the only air refuelable, thus, long range helicopters. The Army's even more limited capability was only short range. When pressed by the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), the services had no plan to carry out the transfer without degrading current capability. Some, like Mr. Noel C. Koch, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs and head of OSD's Special Planning Directorate from 1981 to 1986, felt the Air Force was resisting the revitalization of SOF and evading any role in low intensity conflict (LIC).³

Of course, the transfer came at a time of intense scrutiny by Congress which was still sorting out all the facts surrounding the 1983 Grenada operation and Beirut Marine barracks bombing. Since the Iran mission had become the "template" for lift capability, any potential degradation of the limited capability was to be avoided and, therefore, was construed as service resistance. Questions regarding SOF organization, equipment, command and control, service integration and many others were being raised every day. Whether the answers were forthcoming, reasoned or even heard, the services became the recipients of some powerful legislation.

Important to the SOF rotary wing issue, Mr. Koch wondered if the Air Force believed there was a role for air power in

LIC.⁴ The question itself shows the nature of the debate. Special operations forces are designed to function across the spectrum of conflict. Missions range from unconventional warfare in a conventional setting to insurgency and counterinsurgency (foreign internal defense), peacetime contingency operations, peacekeeping operations, and counterterrorism at the lower levels of conflict.⁵ Yet, the focus usually related SOF and LIC as interchangeable.

It is now five years since the JFDP memorandum was signed and Initiative 17 is yet to be implemented. This study will explore the issues surrounding this SOF rotary wing lift transfer to determine the rationale, the historical evolution and the doctrinal implications of such an agreement.

First, Chapter II on SOF rotary wing lift developments provides a brief sketch of the rotary wing situation over the past decade. It will highlight the implementation process, the hurdles encountered and the current status of the transfer. Next, Army-Air Force cooperation is examined for the services' historical agreements regarding close support for ground forces and Army aviation growth. While the close air support mission is addressed, it is only used to clarify and compare in the roles and missions issues. A chapter on Air Force doctrine explores the implications of Air Force doctrine and its application in the support missions. This look at Air Force beliefs and actions gives insight into how today's SOF support roles have evolved. With this background, the final chapters attempt to assess the findings and provide recommendations.

CHAPTER II

SOF ROTARY WING LIFT DEVELOPMENTS

Background

The Iran rescue mission failure set off a chain reaction in the U.S. government that is still exploding. The Holloway Commission Report analyzed every aspect of the mission and found little to recommend it. While the mission and report dealt with counterterrorism, the ensuing debate found much fault with how the services trained and equipped their forces to execute jointly. The services' special operations forces became an immediate focus and were found to be in a debilitated state. According to the Holloway report, the Army's counterterrorism unit appeared to be the only thought anyone had acted on regarding SOF in the years since Vietnam. The helicopter requirements, and subsequent problems, established in many minds the "template" for SOF rotary wing lift.

What had happened to the Air Force capability of air refuelable helicopters developed in Vietnam? The report did not find great fault with the reasons Navy RH-53s were flown by Marine pilots. Others did however. But, Air Force SOF (AFSOF) rotary wing lift was hardly viable. At that time, it was comprised of five CH-3 air refuelable helicopters (collocated with the Air Force C-130s used in the mission) and eight UH-1 light utility helicopters split between two locations.¹ The Army

had over 8,000 helicopters, all short range, and none dedicated to SOF.²

Air Force Efforts

After the Iran attempt, it was discovered that the Air Force had a long range, air refuelable helicopter capable of all weather, clandestine operations, the HH-53 Pave Low III. While there were only nine in the inventory, it had all the attributes required when using the "template" of the Iran mission. The Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service (ARRS) of Military Airlift Command (MAC) developed the vehicle based on its Vietnam experience as safer, more effective ways were sought in carrying out its charter to rescue downed pilots in enemy territory.³ Why these aircraft were not used in the rescue attempt was never fully explained, only to say that deception would be difficult on board a Navy carrier and the HH-53 was an unproven vehicle.⁴ Interestingly enough, Rescue crews had in 1979 operated standard H-53's aboard Naval carriers for both the Jonestown tragedy in Guyana and the potential evacuation of civilians in Nicaragua.⁵

These aircraft were quickly transferred to AFSOF under Tactical Air Command (TAC)⁶ and began training up to the "template". There were tanker aircraft also in Rescue, KC-130's, and certain of these were designated for primary support to the HH-53's but not organizationally transferred out of ARRS. By late 1980, a rudimentary capability was developed but there was no Air Force move to increase the capability. Actually, TAC had various

programs to increase the capability and numbers of all SOF assets, but none had survived the Program Objective Memoranda (POM) cuts. Then, 1 March 1983 saw all AF30F assets transferred to MAC and the activation of 23rd AF to take charge of both SOF and Rescue.⁷

The new command consolidated PAC's SOF and current Rescue requirements and began the budget battle for upgrades and acquisitions. The primary focus for development was an air vehicle capable of responding to the preferred method of on the spot insertion or recovery--vertical take off and landing (VTOL). This HX program settled on the HH-60D Nighthawk, a highly modified, air refuelable version of the Army's UH-60A Blackhawk, as the future replacement for both Rescue and SOF helicopters. Nine standard configured UH-60As, with rescue hoist, were delivered in 1982 and full scale development of the HH-60D began in early 1983 with a future buy of 243 planned.⁸ However, the H-60 met opposition from several quarters. First, the SOF community felt it an unsuitable replacement for the H-53 due to its load capacity of 12 to 16 versus 38 troops in the H-53. Also, the Air Force, responding to presidential priorities for force modernization of all the services, focused primarily on its strategic and conventional programs like the F-15, B-1, and C-17. With this budget competition, the helicopters available would suffice until the Air Force could find the funds.⁹

While the HH-60D program was in constant danger and the numbers continued to decrease, a further development saw it all

but disappear. In October 1983, Deputy Secretary of Defense (DepSecDef) Thayer tasked all the services to develop master plans recommending SOF force structures to handle the unified commands' requirements for special operations and low intensity conflict.¹⁰ The Air Force response, signed 4 April 1984, included modifying more HH-53s and recommended a buy of 76 CV-22s, the tilt-rotor aircraft being developed by the US Marine Corps.¹¹ The rationale for this limited approach was "improving capabilities and maintainability of current aircraft rather than a quantum leap in the size of the force structure."¹²

Initiative 17

At this point, the May 1984 signing of Initiative 17 called for transfer of the SOF rotary wing lift support mission from the Air Force to the Army.¹³ While provoking opposition from the Air Force SOF community, this initiative was "intended to eliminate duplication and to consolidate all SOF rotary wing aircraft into a single service."¹⁴ The logic of Initiative 17, since the Army had thousands of helicopters and the Air Force had only nine Pave Lows and eight UH-1s (the H-3s were sent to ARRE in 1980) supporting primarily Army special forces made pure numerical sense. However, the Army had no SOF dedicated helicopters much less any capable of air refueling or night, adverse weather, low level operations in hostile territory. A simple transfer was out of the question since the Army had no similar air frames and no crews capable of operating the HH-53's. Without an infra-

structure of sophisticated maintenance support, there was no way the capability could be continued.¹⁵

Both OSD and Congress stepped in next. Their overriding concern was that the mission transfer would decrease capability. The services settled on a gradual transfer, but subsequent events kept it in doubt as the next five years saw considerable executive and legislative inputs to special operations organizations and forces.

In September 1985, DepSecDef Taft issued a decision which said the Air Force would do the long range mission and the Army would do the short range SOF rotary wing mission.¹⁶ Then, in March 1986, in response to legislation in the FY86 DOD Authorization Act requiring DOD's immediate plans for SOF lift,¹⁷ DepSecDef Taft proposed building MH-47Es vice MH-53s.¹⁸ In accordance with Initiative 17, Army Special Operations Aviation (SOA) intended to develop its own long range capability derived from its utility cargo helicopter fleet of CH-47s, designating it the MH-47E. This would prove to be a battle inside the Army.

Later testimony to Congress by Army leadership indicated considerable conventional resistance to a SOF buildup. The H-47s to be modified would impact the Army's planned upgrade of its fleet for the conventional cargo role. By pulling airframes for SOF, conventional units would be less than fully resourced.¹⁹ The services' master plans were constantly being reassessed and the MH-47E proposal was competing with the Air Force proposal. According to a planner working the AFSOF master plan, the Air

Force Chief of Staff had directed computations for both the MH-53 and MH-47 in response to DepSecDef Taft's request for inputs for his March response to Congress. This indicated to the planner that the services were continuing the gradual transfer.²⁰

When the Defense Resources Board (DRB) reviewed the DepSecDef proposal in July 1986, they found it too expensive and directed that alternatives be found. The resulting proposal included 41 MH-53s and 17 MH-47Es by 1992 and a programmed Air Force buy of 55 CV-22s with delivery beginning in 1994. The services' mixed proposal was eventually approved by Secretary Weinberger and included in his Jan 1987 report to Congress.²¹

The transfer continued getting attention in Congress. The 1986 House Appropriations Committee, learning from DOD that the transfer would cost \$600 million over five years and either service proposal for SOF rotary wing lift would meet the requirements, directed "that Initiative 17 ... not be implemented and that no funds are included in this bill for such a purpose."²² The effect of this "direction" cannot be found. In March 1988, the FY89 Army budget request addressing the initiative and SOF rotary wing lift stated, "The Army is developing two specialized aircraft for this mission, both variants of existing proven models: the (17) MH-47E for medium range missions, and the (23) MH-60K for shorter ranges."²³

The FY89 Defense Authorization Act reflected the buy of the air refuelable MH-60K with 11 each in 1990 and 1991 and allocated the MH-47E funds. Additionally, the MH-53J "Enhanced Pave Low

III" modifications were to be completed in FY90.²⁴ This was a requirement legislated by Congress with funds specified for that purpose and only that purpose.²⁵ A further twist was added in November 1988 when DepSecDef Taft issued a Program Budget Decision (PBD) for an added \$532 million in Army funds calling for 17 MH-47Es in 1991 and an additional 34 from FY92-94.²⁶ This reflects a bit of the difficulty OSD was experiencing with the Army. The original master plan number for Pave low comparable vehicles was 51. The Army attempt to mix MH-47s and MH-60s, backed by their other 138 helicopters for SOF short range lift, was a compromise with the conventional requirements for CH-47s. However, OSD had apparently been convinced by the master plan numbers. Perhaps, recognizing Congress' interest and the services' intention to carry out the transfer, OSD would settle for no less than the original numbers.

Current Status

Thus, the Army is programmed to eventually assume the entire SOF rotary wing mission. The Air Force, meanwhile plans to transfer the SOF MH-53s to combat rescue which was also the recipient of Congressional legislation. Funds were added to the FY89 budget to begin procurement of 68 MH-60Gs for combat rescue.²⁷ The 55 CV-22s, specifically destined for a SOF role, were funded and programmed for initial operational capability in 1995 when the first six are delivered to the Air Force. Of note, the Air Force considers the CV-22 "the linchpin of [AFSOF] in the 1990s. . . combining medium speed cruise efficiency with vertical

takeoff and landing. . . complement[ing] the MC-130H (Talon II) to provide the full spectrum of capability to perform the worldwide SOF mission."²⁸ The services appear intent on completing the SOF rotary wing transfer; however, the future hurdles of decreasing defense budgets and Congressional interest in SOF are yet to be negotiated.

The Congressionally mandated SOF organizational infrastructure now a part of DOD looms large in the future. The Goldwater-Nichols DOD Reorganization Act of 1986 and the National Defense Act for FY87, as amended by legislation introduced by Senators Cohen (R-Me), Nunn (D-Ga), and others, resulted in an Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (ASD/SO-LIC) and a new unified command, United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). In January 1989, the Commander in Chief USSOCOM (CINCUSOCCOM) received authorization from SecDef Carlucci to submit his own POM input.²⁹ What effect these organizational changes will have on the SOF rotary wing lift issue is yet to be seen, but there is little doubt these new SOF proponents will develop their own twists in varying degrees.

Conclusion

This rather convoluted process for the past several years reflects the increasing micromanagement by Congress and the difficulty the services have in realizing their programs. Is it all due to Congress' desire to "meddle", or are they more and more concerned with perceptions of service parochialism and con-

ventional mindsets? After all, Initiative 17 was a part of an honest effort by two of the services to cooperate and the Navy later joined the process. The transfer appears to have been caught in the larger turmoil over military reform. Many inside and outside the services were calling for major reforms. However, the SOF rotary wing mission did appear to be a mission without a sponsor in 1980. Why was that? The following chapter reveals the historical precedents that, perhaps, led to this lack of capability in SOF lift support.

CHAPTER III

ARMY AND AIR FORCE: COOPERATION OR RIVALRY?

Initial Agreements

A central issue in the transfer of the SOF rotary wing lift mission to the Army was the accusation that it was just another bureaucratic delineation of roles and missions vice an integrated capabilities approach. A brief synopsis of the relevant history of Army-Air Force interservice cooperation or rivalry, depending on ones' viewpoint, is instructive in highlighting this concern. When the Air Force became an independent service, the primary roles and missions questions revolved around the Navy's desire for all resources necessary to independently execute its sea mission and the Army and Air Force advocacy for avoiding unnecessary duplication and developing teamwork by all services.¹

These divergent views, not addressed in the National Security Act of 1947 restructuring the military, led to a Secretary of Defense initiated meeting of the Joint Chiefs at Key West Naval Base in March 1948. The resulting document, *Functions of the Armed Forces and the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, became known as the Key West Accords. This compromise agreement, basically, allowed the Navy to go its own way but showed the Air Force and Army desire for cooperation on joint missions. Specifically, the Air Force promised to provide airlift and close air support to the Army.²

While this first functional delineation indicated Air Force-Army cooperation, the critics saw something else. "Since all flying was to be done by those whose concern was with strategic bombardment and direct aerial combat, the Air Force 'left the battlefield' because of the way its leaders interpreted its mission."³ Those Army aviators who stayed behind thought of airpower integrated into Army combat operations instead of "massive airpower organized on multifunctional basis".⁴ As this group attempted developing aircraft specifically for their objective, they met Air Force opposition. The Department of Defense had to rule a number of times on these disputes. In both 1956 and 1957, a memorandum and a DOD directive "denied the Army any fixed wing aircraft heavier than 5,000 pounds and expressly prevented the Army from providing its own close air support and strategic or tactical airlift".⁵ This directive was cancelled in 1971 at the Army's insistence but, according to critics, the "damage" was done.⁶

It must be remembered that these disagreements and directives came at a time when massive retaliation was the U.S. strategic concept. The Air Force was preeminent in carrying out that strategy, therefore, it is not too difficult to see how the Army's concerns would receive little attention. The question then, is why were the memoranda and directives required? Could not the budget competition and strategic concepts guide prudent capability builds? A look at subsequent events may shed some light.

Vietnam Era

In the early 1960s, President Kennedy called for a new strategic concept of flexible response to deal with the entire conflict spectrum including low intensity conflict. This call initiated a renewal of special operations and gave them an added focus--counterinsurgency. The U.S. involvement in Vietnam resulted in continuing debate concerning special operations, political versus military objectives, and conventional versus unconventional warfare. Key to this discussion, though, is the development of Army aviation during Vietnam. The Army, restricted by Key West, turned to helicopters for their close combat support.

One fixed wing aircraft they developed (due to an exemption in Key West), the C-7 Caribou, created quite a stir. In 1966, the Air Force demanded the C-7 be given up because of its tactical airlift role. An agreement that year between the Army and Air Force chiefs of staff divided the tactical airlift role into fixed wing for the Air Force and rotary wing for the Army. Each service agreed to relinquish its claim for aircraft of the others domain. For the Air Force, this meant helicopter intratheater movement, fire support, supply and resupply.⁷ Combat rescue and special air warfare use of rotary wing was not included.⁸ The C-7 was transferred to the Air Force in 1967 and by 1971 all C-7s were either in the reserves or given to the Vietnamese Air Force.⁹ Thus, Army aviation was reborn on the helicopter and the Army continued developing them for battlefield mobility and close fire power.

To say the Air Force did not support the Army in Vietnam would be a mistake. There were many examples of close coordination and support, both in firepower and airlift. As a matter of fact, because of the massive Air Force firepower available, "one of the tactics of U.S. forces was to draw large Communist units into an engagement so that the full brunt of American aircraft could be brought to bear on them".¹⁰ Air Force Chief of Staff General Curtis LeMay saw the Army helicopter gunship development as an attempt to reduce the Air Force role in close air support. In late 1964, he chided both General William Westmoreland, Commander of U.S. Forces, and Lieutenant General Joseph Moore, top Air Force officer in Vietnam, for what he believed was a misuse of the Air Force and for not upholding air force doctrine.¹¹ And, this was before the major troop buildup.

Whether LeMay was interested in "turf" or believed in the Air Force role of close support, the Army's chief concern was with command and control. During the disagreement over the C-7, the Army wanted this light tactical airlifter under the "control of army field commanders, not under the centralized control of air force airlift commanders".¹² This recurrent theme, as in World War II, was still a divisive issue between Army and Air Force airpower doctrine.

An Army Constrained

The Army's continued helicopter dependence is at the heart of the argument against functional divisions between the services. The implication is that roles and missions

delineations based on aircraft type puts the Army in a box. Journalist Gregg Easterbrook in the September 1981 Washington Monthly found that defense planners prefer small airplanes over helicopters in close support and tactical airlift missions.¹³ This is because helicopters are more costly both to acquire and operate than light airplanes and are extremely vulnerable to small arms fire. For example, one source says the Army lost 10,000 helicopters, either crashed or shot down, during the Vietnam war. The accuracy of this claim is questionable, but indicates the vehemence on the subject.¹⁴ Therefore, the roles and missions demarcations are seen as dangerous to both personnel and, more importantly, military capability.

The acceptance by the services of the functional divisions of fixed wing and longer ranging for the Air Force and rotary wing and shorter ranged for the Army, except in special cases, was institutionalized by the 1980s. Thus, it is not surprising that the Joint Development Group (JDG), the Army and Air Force Chiefs' initial ad hoc committee guiding the JFDP, would see air roles and missions in this light.

JFDP Agreements

In addition to the transfer of SOF rotary wing lift of Initiative 17, there were other JFDP initiatives dealing with air roles and missions. Initiative 24 reaffirmed the Air Force mission of providing fixed wing close air support (CAS) to the Army.¹⁵ There was no action seen as necessary other than to restate this support and the initiative was considered closed

upon the Chiefs' signatures to the memorandum. Another of the original 31 initiatives, number 16, dealt with combat search and rescue (SAR) and established Air Force and Army responsibilities for SAR along previous informal lines. However, this initiative was, at first, considered by the JDG to be an Army function because they envisioned all rotary wing lift support an Army responsibility. "Upon reflection, however, they decided that the morale and customized training advantages of each service 'taking care of its own' outweighed the advantages of a rationalized single service C3 for SAR."¹⁶ Service intentions were further highlighted by the notice given tilt-rotor technology, the CV-22, which combined attributes of both fixed and rotary wing. It "would also require close coordination".¹⁷ Thus, the services functional divisions could be in for a strain if the tilt-rotor is a success.

However, this cooperative venture appears to have had every intention of avoiding future conflicts. Initiative 26, applicable only to aircraft in a ground support role, intended to "establish specific service responsibility for each manned aircraft system and. . . procedures for the development of coordinated joint positions on new aircraft starts before program initiation."¹⁸ This would appear to give the Army a major say in future Air Force support aircraft development as well as keep the Air Force informed as to Army developments.

The genesis and focus of the JFDP was the services' desire to "avoid unwanted duplication of research, development, force

structure, and operations"¹⁹ in its development of responsibilities and procedures for AirLand combat operations. The cooperation exhibited by the chiefs and their committee was a visible change from the past delineations of tasks. The spirit with which the process was carried out indicated a "desire to accommodate the needs of both services".²⁰

Conclusion

Some innovative processes were begun in the JFDP, but when the process dealt with aviation, the roles and missions delineation again settled on fixed versus rotary wing, except when it came to combat rescue of downed Air Force pilots. Additionally, carrying the conventional mindset to special operations with a fixed and rotary wing split created an uproar from the AFSOF community and many outside the service who felt the split ignored the strategic aspect of SOF and its commitment across the spectrum of conflict. More importantly, it ignored current capabilities since the Army was unable to accept the long range, adverse weather commitment for some time.

Why would the Air Force continue giving away what General LeMay felt was a part of its doctrinal missions, the close support of the Army? After all, the Air Force was built on strong doctrinal grounds. Was Air Force doctrine in its application ignoring the basic "support tenets"? The following chapter examines basic Air Force doctrine and attempts to derive the application thereof.

CHAPTER IV

AIR FORCE DOCTRINE: ROOM FOR ROTARY WING LIFT?

Doctrine: Fundamental principles by which the military forces or elements thereof guide their actions in support of national objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgment in application.

JCS Publication 1, Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms

Aerospace doctrine is a statement of officially sanctioned beliefs and warfighting principles which describe and guide the proper use of aerospace forces in military action.

AFM 1-1, Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force

The issue of Initiative 17 was determination of who had responsibility for lifting special operation forces (SOF) into and out of action. This, more often than not, required rotary wing lift, or what may be called direct airlift support to SOF ground elements. By agreeing to the transfer, did the Air Force all but abandon its basic "support tenets" of providing the necessary assistance in its air power doctrine?

Doctrinal Background

Current aerospace doctrine recognizes the importance of air power's direct support to ground forces. While the debates rage on what vehicle (and who flies it) close air support (CAS) requires, the importance of CAS is implicit as one of the nine missions in Air Force Manual 1-1, Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the

United States Air Force. Under the airlift mission, another of the nine missions, "airlift projects power through airdrop, extraction, and airlanding of ground forces and supplies into combat."¹ Into combat is the operative phrase. In executing special operations, forces "are normally organized and employed in small formations capable of both supporting actions and independent operations, with the purpose of enabling timely and tailored responses throughout the spectrum of conflict."² Preparation of forces to accomplish the special operations mission, also one of the nine missions, is a "fundamental role of the Air Force."³ Therefore, basic Air Force doctrine, in the words of General John D. Ryan in 1972, includes providing "ground and naval forces the assistance necessary for them to control their environment."⁴

While the above briefly reflects beliefs concerning air power's "support tenets", who does what with what has often been the overriding concern. Based on the assertion "that air power must be centrally controlled and employed by an air commander,"⁵ the Air Force has constantly evolved amid complaints that it was merely organizing and equipping for its primary mission of long range bombing.⁶ However, the history of Air Force doctrinal development indicates a recognition of what was needed. How to support the Army in its quest for mobility and sustainment became the focus of debate. As mentioned, General LeMay recognized the erosion of Air Force close support in Vietnam in 1964.

This recognition coincided with the publication the same

year of the first AFM 1-1 compiling basic Air Force doctrine.⁷ This manual added the policy of flexible response and devoted an entire chapter to counterinsurgency.⁸ Included was the importance of airlift in both conventional and counterinsurgency operations. "In conventional warfare, airlift contributes to rapid concentration of air and ground forces and resupply of tactical units in the field."⁹ Further, airlift "provides quick-reaction mobility and supply to ground forces, to enable them to rapidly achieve and maintain contact with insurgent units."¹⁰ Again, whether General LeMay was concerned with doctrine or guarding Air Force roles, it is clear the Army's development of a helicopter air arm was disrupting the earlier agreements on who did what with what.

Doctrinal Issues

A key ingredient in Air Force doctrine that often resulted in disagreements over how to support ground forces was its adherence to air power's flexibility and, thereby, the efficiency produced by multi-role aircraft. For example, the 1966 issue of AFM 2-4, Tactical Airlift, listed four basic tasks of tactical airlift--logistics, airborne, aeromedical, and special operations.¹¹ None of these had priority over the others. With centralized control, an airlift resource could respond as the need arose and the situation dictated.¹² The logic of this is apparent to most members of the Air Force; however, its practice in prior years left many in the Army skeptical and, therefore, in favor of Army aviation controlled by a field commander.¹³

Whether the Army complaints were valid or not, the perception was that the Army would develop an aircraft more in keeping with the close air support role. A small, maneuverable fighter with loiter capability. Of course, the Air Force saw such a vehicle as extremely vulnerable as the enemy surface to air threat increased. The multi-role aircraft would always have limitations of some kind; better to be survivable in most cases.

Impact on SOF

The 1966 agreement dividing the tactical airlift role into fixed wing for the Air Force and rotary wing for the Army further eroded the support doctrine General LeMay had been concerned about. However, the SOF mission was not a part of the agreement and the evolution of its doctrine continued resulting in a separate chapter on the subject in the 1971 edition of AFM 1-1. It addressed the role of SOF as primarily oriented "to the performance of specialized activities at a low intensity level of conflict; however, [AFSOF] are also capable of conducting conventional combat operations. . . at any level of conflict."¹⁴ Regarding lift of SOF, the manual stated, "Air power is used to infiltrate or exfiltrate unconventional warfare forces (and) to keep them supplied."¹⁵

This doctrine was apparent in the force structure of the time and included attention to the characteristics of air power - speed, range and flexibility - which have been a part of Air Force doctrine from the beginning.¹⁶ Both special operations and combat rescue helicopters were air refuelable and played key

roles in the 1970 Sontay prison raid and the 1975 Mayaguez rescue mission.¹⁷ However, the fact that none were available only five years later for the Iran rescue attempt speaks volumes for the application of this part of basic Air Force doctrine.

It is possible that the Air Force, seasoned by numerous roles and missions settlements, simply regarded the SOF rotary wing lift capability as someone else's domain. And, of course, doctrine does not require an immediate capability manifested in some piece of equipment, nor does it proscribe the exact vehicle to use. Its application requires judgment and, while official, only guides the services on how to equip and train the forces. However, how doctrine is translated into strategy and force structure defines its "actions in support of national objectives"¹⁸ and reveals judgments in doctrinal application.

Air Force Application of Doctrine

This raises the spectre of whether the Air Force does see its "doctrinal missions" as primary and secondary. There are those who say the Air Force still adheres to the military strategy of the aerospace school of strategic thought. That is that airpower is decisive by control of the air and by destruction of enemy war making potential, eg., industrial bases; and air support of ground forces is secondary.¹⁹ One might argue that procurement of the C-17 for airlift, the AC-130 gunship and MC-130 Talon II for SOF support, and the search for an effective CAS aircraft negate these beliefs. However, while applauding the efforts, there are those in the Army who see a continuation of

the multi-role aircraft and say "will it be available when I need it?" Without a strong proponency within the Air Force, the support missions have a tendency to atrophy much like the deplorable condition of AFSOF ability to actually get the ground element into action in Iran.

Does the Air Force see its doctrinal missions in primary and secondary categories? The following observation regarding an air staff meeting on force modernization and chaired by the Director of Plans, HQ USAF, is intriguing.

[The Director] posed a 'vertical versus horizontal expansion' question to his directorate in the Fall of 1982. Its essence: In times of constant or receding budgets (zero sum) can the Air Force effectively handle missions that are not central to its existence (horizontal) without limiting its capability to perform the central mission (vertical)? Should not the horizontal mission areas be terminated? He further postulated that rotary wing support for special operations was 'horizontal' to the Air Force mission and the monies saved by eliminating those helicopters could be recycled into core Air Force mission areas--air superiority and air interdiction. Whether the question was posed from a devil's advocate perspective is not known, but it certainly aligns with the aerospace grand strategy view of the world. 20

Indeed, whether from a devil's advocate view or not, the fact that basic doctrinal missions would be classified in "vertical" versus "horizontal" categories indicates actual practice of Air Force doctrine through its strategy.

The effect of this view of aerospace strategy creates some interesting attempts by those units assigned the "horizontal" missions. The activation of 23rd Air Force combining special operations and combat rescue forces is a good example. The consolidation recognized what became known as the synergism of the

two. This referred to the belief that the battlefield of the future would, unlike Vietnam, only allow clandestine penetration under the cover of darkness or weather, therefore, combat rescue was an inherent capability of special operations. Although 23AF was not restricted, as was the Army by agreements, on type of aircraft it could envision for its mission, its size and importance in the Air Force bureaucracy effectively limited its options to "off the shelf" airframes and technology. Hence, envisioned programs died and the tilt-rotor technology developed in the mid 1960s and pursued in the mid 1970s would only be an artists rendition in the command's briefing under "future enhancements" for sometime to come.²¹

Conclusion

The Air Force's basic aerospace doctrinal application is, of course, impacted by many external and internal requirements and limitations. Perhaps, this ebb and flow cannot capture all the perfect solutions. This realization may have been recognized by past service chiefs including those responsible for the 1984 joint development process. In 1986, they signed an additional agreement that included the following doctrinal acknowledgement.

Army aviation is structured primarily to support air-land combat operations by providing a highly mobile combat arm organic to ground forces. Ground commanders command and employ these aviation elements in synchronization with other combat arms to achieve assigned ground maneuver objectives....

Air Force forces are structured primarily to support global and theater-wide operations as well as air-land combat operations by providing aircraft with speed, range and flexibility to promptly project decisive combat power wherever needed.²²

This is a clear doctrinal delineation of how the two services' use air power. However, the expanded discussion of the above also acknowledges that Army forces are comprised of "predominantly" rotary wing aircraft and Air Force forces are "predominantly" fixed wing aircraft.²³ The statement is also clearly conventional in application. Applying conventional mind-sets to the unconventional can be as erroneous as developing a weapon system and then developing a doctrine for its use instead of vice versa. The next chapter will attempt to assess and clarify the issues raised thus far in the hope some positive direction can be derived.

CHAPTER V

ASSESSMENT

This study of a joint Army and Air Force attempt to implement a warfighting initiative points out many of the difficult issues inherent in a large bureaucracy responsible for preparing a national defense. These issues are evolved and impacted by a range of events from historical relations to the current political environment and derive from internal as well as external pressures and differences. Relevant to this study are three broad areas which encompass the key issues. This chapter will address these areas: the service system for defense development, Army-Air Force differences, and joint cooperation.

Service System for Defense Development

There is no doubt the priority of national defense is deterrence of the high intensity conflicts which threaten the very survival of the U.S. and its allies and friends. However, when the services articulate that spending and attention to the most likely event on the conflict spectrum is in balance, they should remember how this lower end was funded and developed. While it is not a perfect world and there will always be constraints, Congressional actions in the past indicate that the military development system must be able to adequately address weaknesses in the defense posture. The historical culture that evolved between the services ensures that each will attempt to

field a force in keeping with its perceived critical missions. However, a competition for budget share also ensures that there will be limited sharing or voluntary diversion of one service's funds to bolster another's critical area. Without rewards for a willingness to contribute to the interdependence of all, the competition will continue. While competition may ensure the best methods and systems rise to the surface, it can also result in inadequate capability in critical areas.

This inadequate capability most often is seen in areas where the independent services' roles and missions are not central to their existence. SOF direct lift support was just such an area. Of course, special operations across the services was in such desrepair that one might argue that there was little need for a lift capability. Yet, once the need was articulated, the services' system for answering the need was close to incapable of responding. Arguments for other priorities were well-founded and strategic and conventional force modernization definitely required the lion's share of the budget.

Yet, was the resistance even the budget amount? From 1981 to 1988, the total SOF outlay was \$9 billion with almost half of it in 1987 and 88 alone. The Secretary of Defense's Annual Report for FY89 reflected an additional \$9 billion for FY89-92. This, spread over 12 years, was an average outlay of \$1.5 billion. The FY90 annual report reflects added Congressional inputs that changed these figures somewhat. From 1981 to 1989, more than \$11.8 billion was invested and \$8.4 billion is

programmed to FY92 for a total of \$20.2 billion for the entire DOD SOF program. This trend is evident in each of the past three annual reports' reflection of programmed increases derived from Congressional legislation. Further, the defense budgets peaked in 1986 and the services have seen zero or negative real growth each successive year. Therefore, the majority of these SOF programs have hit at the most constrained budgetary times of the decade.

If the budget amounts are now available and there is now a plethora of planned aircraft for SOF, why did it take so long? Some in the Air Force say it takes time to develop the technology required and program for the build.¹ Others say the Air Force could not be coerced by a hue and cry and, besides, study is required to determine the proper direction. They further point to positive programs like terrorism awareness training and the Army-Air Force Center for Low Intensity Conflict established at Langley AFB at the suggestion of the Air Force.² All true with some highly commendable programs. On the other hand, the Pave Low III was produced in 1979 and 80, 13 years after the statement of need (SON). The HX SON was written in 1977 and the HH-60D FSD began in 1983. The MC-130 combat Talon II requirement competed the budget in 1980. In 1983, the services were tasked for their master plans. These were only plans, not budgets.³ Without Congressional heat, it is doubtful any of these would be in development today. Hindsight is "twenty-twenty", but for programs already on the board, albeit a dusty one, the wait not only seems

long but more costly in terms of current competing programs.

Is it necessarily wrong that SOF revitalization encountered such perceived resistance? Probably not since, in reality, it competed like all other programs and, like others perhaps more important, failed the system's priority test. The issue is necessity and proponency. When the services are left to their separate budget shares, they develop separate priorities. The system will always have difficulty articulating the necessity for such a small segment as SOF due to the lack of well-placed and sufficient proponents. More importantly, without senior leadership attention to and knowledge of unconventional aspects of war-fighting (whether proponents or not), the likelihood of developing the wrong force structure is increased.

Army-Air Force Differences

The interface of the U.S. Air Force and Army, has always been an area of high conflict potential. The mere fact that one spawned the other and both continue to seek the best methods for dealing with their specific environments simply adds to the differing opinions both inside and outside the services. Add the need for interdependence and it is easy to see the potentially diverse views each can have. However, the Air Force and Army occasionally try to overcome this tendency. Having experienced World War II together, the two services naturally saw cooperation and jointness as the best way to proceed. However, competing strategies for their limited resources created a system of priorities that was certain to exclude some ideas, methods and

systems. How these two services approached the issue of airpower has had significant doctrinal and organizational impact.

Air Force Doctrinal Issues

Air Force basic aerospace doctrine, while leaning heavily on the strategic and conventional spectrum of conflict, recognizes the inherent characteristics of its environment and the support needs of other forces. Disconnects are possible, however, in interpretation and application. Doctrine is a belief of what air power should do and only a guide on how to do it. It is held hostage to physical laws and technology, but guides thinking on the best possible methods at the time. The idealistic interpretation would be cost prohibitive. To do all things indicated in doctrinal purity would require research and development investments far out of proportion to any benefits or even possibility. This is one of the reasons doctrine calls for judgment in application.

The application, or lack thereof, of doctrine is where many disconnects appear. If a service professes a series of missions where air power is decisive, either independently or supporting coequally, then a lack in any of those missions opens serious questions. If this lack is shown, or perceived, in similar mission types, e.g., direct support for ground forces while the "glory" missions appear to be covered, the void could be either devastating or filled by another agency.

The Air Force belief in flexibility evolved an adherence to "multi-role" aircraft. By developing air vehicles capable of a

number of combat tasks, the air commander had both the principle of economy of force and mass at his disposal. A side effect, however, was usually a much larger, more technical jet that was more effective in one of its tasks than others. This inability of technology to provide a perfect multi-role vehicle to accomplish numerous Air Force doctrinal missions, thus providing maximum flexibility, is a continuous source of debate.

While the multi-role aircraft flexibility gives credence to the Air Force idea of centralized control and decentralized execution, the ground force rank and file that experienced times when the flexible airpower was busy elsewhere evolved a considerable advocacy for constant coverage. Thus, Army aviation developed over time to provide it. The shortcomings of only ones and twos or a handful of aircraft was immediately recognized and every division eventually would need, at least, an aviation battalion. That this was probably a natural evolution for greater mobility and organic firepower, and may have been an Army responsibility from the beginning, appears to have held little sway in the early years.

For a newly independent Air Force attempting to carve out a solid footing in the defense establishment, any Army attempt to move into areas of its environment was encroachment. Thus, the numerous agreements and memoranda attempting to define, develop, and delineate the sought after support. The fixed and rotary wing delineations became the services' method of dealing with perhaps a "too hard" problem in the separate service system.

Fixed and Rotary Wing Split

This evolution of Air Force being primarily fixed wing and long range and Army aviation being primarily rotary wing and short range becomes intriguing in light of the hostage rescue failure. If the evolution driven by grand strategy, vice doctrine, was correct, why then were Marine pilots flying Navy helicopters on one of the most daring, clandestine missions ever designed? Arguments regarding the "ad hocness" of the joint force, the operational security required (thus limiting expertise), and the possibility of an over ambitious plan all have their bearing in the proper context. However, the responsible service had no capability and it appears the artificial constraints of roles and missions devised over the years had left the US incapable of projecting its force in keeping with the political desires of the time.

What about the "technological" division of fixed and rotary wing? Helicopters have evolved for various reasons including its "on-the-spot" capability and because the Army found it an avenue to retain its own air power. The critical question of the technology division is by limiting the Army to rotary wing only in its close support missions, is there a chance they are being stifled regarding other advanced technologies? What if the Air Force, upon its independence, had been limited to propeller driven aircraft only? It's certain prop driven aircraft would be far advanced today, however, the real innovations come when there are only natural constraints. The answer should be that the Air

Force would have developed the innovation since that was its charter. Past actions, however, leave much doubt that as much attention was focused on the direct support mission as the innovation would require. As for the arguments regarding the unsafe helicopter, the debates will rage unabated until the answer is proven in conflict and even then the proof may depend on ones' perspective.

Command and Control

Another issue, more appropriately a subissue of the foregoing, is the Army desire for control of aviation assets by the field commander. A commander on the ground with troops in contact wants firepower and transport when he says, not when a central function is able to divert the "flexible" air power in the theater. As noted above, not exactly efficiency or economy of force or even a totally legitimate worry, but this one divisive thread has existed since armies and aircraft began fighting together. There may be some applicability to this desire, but is it not something of a parochial smokescreen? The real issue appears to be the lack of faith in the Air Force to develop the kinds of air vehicles, and in large enough numbers, to guarantee the Army ground commander his "immediate" support. The intent of the JFDP, especially Initiative 26 where the services would have an input in each other's manned systems development from the concept phase on, appears to be an attempt to answer this long standing Army grievance.⁴

This doctrinal command and control smokescreen provides

endless argument for the two separate services, however, the ramifications become serious in the joint arena and are glaring when looking at SOF support. Because SOF operations require clandestine capability, there is not a "you call, we haul" mindset with SOF lift assets. Whether in the conventional or LIC environment, each operation requires extensive planning and coordinated execution. Many assets are often required to get the ground element to their target and back. Fixed wing tanker aircraft get the helicopters carrying the ground team close enough. Fixed and rotary wing gunships helped, perhaps, by conventional fighter aircraft may provide close fire support or diversion. An airborne command and control aircraft may be required to orchestrate the entire operation. This all requires dedicated, well trained air assets across the board.⁵

Current joint (the only way most special operations can be executed) SOF task forces (JSOTF) or theater commands (i.e., SOCEUR) train every day under the flexibility of air power rule. An air commander (COMAFSOF, not necessarily an Air Force type), responsible for all assigned air assets, works directly for the Commander, JSOTF. Thus, all SOF aviation is "managed" to provide the optimum lift capability based on the ground element's needs. Although the scale of SOF command and control is small, the principle is the same. Is this further indication that the difference of opinion on the large scale may be terms, not reality? Of relevance, however, is what this means to joint operations and the development of joint doctrine.

Joint Cooperation

The services now consult on the weapon systems each is developing in the areas of mutual concern and close support.⁶ While promising, only time will tell whether it is a new era. Regarding SOF lift, the services' attempt at cooperation seems like business as usual when looking at the CV-22 and MH-47E issues and a collateral issue of combat rescue.

The Tilt-rotor Situation

The Army was in and out of the CV-22 program for two to three years, with allusions only to possible tactical airlift roles. Then, its FY89 budget request had no mention of the CV-22.⁷ Perhaps, the "close coordination" called for by the JFDP had taken place. More likely, Army priorities simply had no room for the vehicle since its LHX (light helicopter experimental) program is a major on-going development and holds promise for future battlefield support as well as the major share of the Army's aircraft procurement endeavors.

The CV-22 will join the AFSOF inventory in 1995, barring any hiccups, about the same time the Army's 51st MH-47E is to be delivered, if that program does not slip again. While not totally a rotary wing vehicle, the CV-22 as an AFSOF asset raises questions regarding Air Force intentions. Why transfer a mission based on vehicle type to only attempt to continue the same mission with a semi-rotary wing vehicle? Of course, the fixed wing aspects of the tilt-rotor vehicle give it more "dash" speed, thus, slightly better range. By calling it complimentary to the

MC-130 Combat Talon, the Air Force is clearly categorizing it as a flexible, multi-role aircraft. There is no question that, if successful, there will be no lack of work for such a versatile capability.

However, the mission capability of the CV-22 appears to be primarily direct SOF lift support, the same as decided in the Initiative 17 transfer. What is the difference? This development appears to have little to do with mission delineation but, rather, aircraft type. A continuation of the fixed and longer ranging and rotary wing and shorter ranging split, perhaps? If not, then why did not the CV-22 end up as an Army asset, especially in light of the difficulty with the MH-47E development? Arguments regarding the lack of Army supportability for such a small number may hold some credence, yet, will it be any different for the Air Force?

MH-47E Development

Of relevance to joint cooperation is the difficulty the Army has had and is having developing the MH-47E. When a role or mission is decided by agreement, even under the rather progressive JFDP, simply saying that's an Air Force mission or that's an Army mission does not always address the critical issues. Each service has ideas, methods, and procedures to share. How much support did the Army get in its development of the MH-47E? Other than a tanker aircraft to test its probe? None. Yet, the Air Force had extensive knowledge for the long range helicopter concept and had given the mission to the Army.

While contractors may be different than those who designed the Air Force capabilities, there was much to learn from over 20 years experience with modifying helicopters for this mission. This is not to say the Army even asked for help, just to point out how far the services joint development efforts have really gone. These separate attempts to field comparable systems are expensive and become fraught with potential external meddling.

Combat Search and Rescue (SAR)

A collateral issue of this rotary wing lift study, combat SAR, raises some interesting questions regarding joint cooperation. Initiative 16 established Air Force and Army zones on the battlefield relating to Air Force capability for distance or penetration. Beyond Air Force zones, Army SOF would be responsible for SAR using jointly developed tactics, techniques, and procedures such as setting up escape and evasion (E&E) nets.⁸ This joint effort requires additional training and expertise for Army SOF, but recognizes the necessity for clandestine SAR operations on the battlefield of the future.

Air Force combat SAR is the mission referred to in the JFDP which uses "specialized" rotary wing aircraft. The move to consolidate Rescue and AFSOF in 1983, as noted in chapter II, recognized the synergism of the missions and also gave proponentcy to two smaller entities in the Air Force bureaucracy. The development of the transfer of SOF rotary wing lift, leaving the rescue mission to Air Force rotary wing assets, and the programming for the CV-22 for SOF begs a question. First, rescue helicopters

were incapable of anything short of a benign area pickup due to the long drought in procurement and the transfer of the MH-53 to SOF. The budget competition continued stifling any build. Then, the SOF master plans were published and the SOF transfer was initiated. The return of the Pave Lows to rescue would not have increased the capability greatly. The CV-22, a rescue vision for years, was then programmed for SOF. There is little doubt that Congressional involvement and OSD direction made the path for either SOF or Rescue somewhat fuzzy; however, if the Air Force wanted out of the helicopter business, the CV-22 could have been procured for rescue only or in addition to SOF.

The intriguing aspect of all this is the reaction to the 23rd AF vision of combat SAR as an inherent capability of special operations. There is little documented on these reactions, but this author, in the midst of the scene for the past ten years, has developed the following perceptions. The SOF community wanted the lift assets dedicated solely to its mission and saw rescue as a collateral mission. The specific complaint heard most often was an AFSOF commander would have requests for two missions, one to pick up an SF team and the other a downed pilot. Someone would have to wait and the guess was it would be the Army again. Once again, an irrational fear began to drive organization. This ignored the obvious procedures that would be employed. For example, both the team and pilot would be dealing with predetermined pickup cycles and safe areas. Neither rescue nor SOF lift would be forging ahead in large, spontaneous task forces as in Vietnam.

On the other hand, the Air Force fighter community was concerned since it was apparent at the various bases, especially in the rugged western U.S., that there were fewer rescue assets each year. The peacetime environment was bad enough, but what did this mean in a crisis or war? Even with this concern, it took Congress to authorize, in the FY89 Budget, a procurement of MH-60Gs specifically for combat rescue.

Therefore, combat rescue is to be revived and, if the SOF rotary wing transfer is completed in the early 1990s, stands to gain a considerable capability with the mix of MH-60G and MH-53J helicopters. It will also be separated from SOF. There is, of course, a possibility all this will change again. However, as it currently stands, there will be two similar capabilities in tactics, techniques and procedures performing two missions that require the same capabilities on the battlefield of the future. That they will be in separate services may be reason enough, but, after all, was that not what the JFDP was all about?

Conclusion

That there will be a fairly robust special operations capability beyond the 1990's appears evident. The force structure in aircraft alone will have increased from 76 in 1981 to 296 by 1992.⁹ The personnel and organizations of SOF are developing and getting stronger. USSOCOM has serious marching orders and should get the support to carry them out. On rotary wing lift for SOF, neither Congress nor OSD, as an entity, seems to care which service does it, only that it is done. As for the

services' development of the transfer, it appears a simple continuation of previous changes to the original design.

Since the Air Force priority system cannot acquire every item to deal with every task and threat in the world, the central missions will always be supported. However, when outside players, like Congress, see what may be resistance or parochialism, the service will find itself procuring something it might not have wanted and without an integrated plan for its use. This appears to be what has evolved over the past nine years since the SOF awakening and past five since the rotary wing transfer was initiated. That the Air Force had any chance of turning the tide and avoiding the "meddling" appears unlikely. However, the most troubling aspect throughout this evolution is the lack of clear Air Force doctrinal action. This does not mean to follow AFM 1-1 to the letter but, rather, to avoid the tendency to put belief in technology before ideas as the preferred method of force development. While the Army articulates its doctrine and develops from that doctrine, the Air Force tends to rely solely on tactics and new technology. In countless discussions with fellow Air Force officers, doctrine is seen as something ethereal or as "dogma" that gets in the way of new and fresh ideas for technological breakthroughs. While in no way was this a scientific sampling, these same attitudes were present throughout my research. Other than General LeMay, I found no recent "doctrinal worriers" evident. Perhaps, this is all semantics since there are beliefs held by many in the Air Force that could be

considered doctrine; however, the concern over clear articulation of what the Air Force as an entity believes is warranted in light of the future era of jointness.

Without this solid doctrinal footing, the Air Force in the joint arena will appear to be constantly shifting and accomodating to those more doctrinally articulate. Congress has directed, in the most explicit language and detail, a number of service actions, and they have funded these directions. They are listening. If all they hear is competition and parochialism, the reformers' calls for change will find ready acceptance with those constitutionally authorized to raise and equip the armed forces.

While there are few perfect solutions to national defense, or any that most can agree to, there are some directions evident. The final chapter highlights some key areas where the services can facilitate current direction and, perhaps, focus the external direction if not take the lead in their own development.

CHAPTER VI

ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter will briefly highlight those issues central to this study and, where direction is evident, provide recommendations. Some issues are simply perceptions of problems and are raised for further debate and eventual resolution by either action or inaction. In such a dynamic environment as national defense with so many agencies involved, inaction by one many times leads to action by another. The key is to know when to choose the right one.

Issues With Recommendations

Force development for areas of mutual interest and concern was a key issue of the Army-Air Force joint force development process. This process should be institutionalized and expanded to the entire conflict spectrum. An expansion of the scope would allow not only conventional SOF reviews, but would address the capabilities for responses to lesser threats in the LIC environment. With the Navy included now, the joint staff should take responsibility for the process.

Specifically, the Directorate for Force Structure, Resource, and Assessment, J-8, should establish procedures for concept development and drive the process. Instead of only the services monitoring each others concept and development of a system, J-8 could ensure joint efforts to develop the concepts and assess the

impact on the total force. Then, a sharing of expertise would increase the chance of a capable system many times over.

Doctrinal differences in the services' application of air-power appear to create force structure problems in less central missions. While the services must independently develop according to their environment, there is a need for immediate attention to areas such as SOF lift command and control. USSOCOM may eventually solve this; however, the Joint Directorate for Operational Plans and Interoperability, J-7, should vigorously pursue the completion of its joint doctrine and joint tactics, techniques and procedures development program. Instead of waiting for the services, the process must be proactive and require resolution to get the guidance to the field. The services must be willing to interact and assist in the process.

Additionally, the services must continue and expand efforts such as the Center for Low Intensity Conflict and their respective special warfare centers. Constant joint reviews of doctrine, tactics and systems to employ them should be a key item for the J-7, J-8, and USSOCOM staff. The services must be willing to assist in addressing and correcting, if need be, the deficiencies raised. By keeping the infrastructure vibrant, the forces will remain current and capable.

Issues For Further Study and Debate

The separate service system for defense development in the aggregate appears to produce exceptionally well when dealing with

a service's central missions. The conflicts and disconnects appear when areas less central require more than one service to adequately cover the need. This appears to be the focus of past Congressional and OSD directions. The strengthening of the JCS and OSD staff and adding USSOCOM may take care of SOF for now; however, how many other potentially hazardous areas lie in wait for the U.S. defense structure? Perhaps none, but should not a continuation of the current jointness ensure the areas are identified and resolutions found?

Should combat rescue be a mission of USSOCOM? This question deals with both the fixed and rotary wing split and the separation of Rescue and SOF rotary wing assets. It is intriguing to consider the combined capabilities of these two forces in view of past necessary collaborations like the Son Tay prison raid and the Mayaguez rescue. Is it duplication to have two separate, similar capabilities even though they will be in separate services?

That clear solutions are not always available is not surprising. The evolution of the services and the way they do business is a dynamic process. That the future will likewise be dynamic is assured. The process is also extremely complex and while not perfect is probably a sound method for developing a national defense. The recent strengthening of the JCS functions could prove to be, if applied, the catalyst for gaining on that "perfect solution".

NOTES

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5. These are the four most common categorizations of military activity in low intensity conflict and are used in the SecDef's report to Congress annually. For the basis of these missions, See Army-AirForce Center for Low Intensity Conflict, CLIC PAPERS, "Operational Considerations for Military Involvement in Low Intensity Conflict," Langley AFB, VA, June 1987, p. 2.

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2. *Ibid.*, p.66. See also Major Walker C. Broadhurst, *Revitalization of Army Special Operations Forces*, (Maxwell AFB, AL: Air Command and Staff College, April 1987), p. 10.
3. U.S. Government, Congress, Committee on Appropriations, Defense Subcommittee, "A Report to the Committee on Appropriations, U.S. House of Representatives on the Special Operations Forces of the Department of Defense," *Hearings on Department of Defense Appropriations for 1987*, 99th Congress, 2nd Session, Part 6, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1986), p. 594.
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5. From personal knowledge of the author who, at the time, was assigned to the HQ ARRS staff. While not exactly clandestine-

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12. Major Brad Baker, "Air Force Special Operations Forces (AFSOF): How Did We Decide What Was Enough?" Airlift, The Journal of the Airlift Operations School, Vol X, Spring 1988, p. 14.

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14. Ibid., p. 57.

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